

## **Rumor Tracking and Management**

### ***What is rumor?***

A rumor is defined as unverified information that is transmitted from one person to others. *Rumors are a natural response to uncertain or threatening times.*

Rumors are neither inherently good nor bad. They can be either true or false, or a mixture of both. And there are two types of rumors namely:

- Misinformation- incorrect information spread by people without the intent to deceive or pass out wrong information, for example through misunderstanding of the message.
- Disinformation- incorrect information spread by people in order to deceive or manipulate others.

While means and motives may vary, the impact is the same – people are unable to make informed choices about their future. Basing these choices on unverified information can have devastating consequences.

### **Categories of rumor**

- Wish rumors.
- Fear rumors.
- Hostility rumors.

***Fear rumors*** are the most prevalent type. They allow people to respond either by taking physical action, or by insulating themselves against the emotional impact of such an event.

### **Why do people share rumors?**

- Explain a situation or an event.
- Share useful or entertaining information.
- Define oneself by being 'in the know' or making others look bad.
- Develop relationships by using information as a currency to feel connected to issues affecting them.
- Mislead or deceive often economically or politically motivated.

### ***THE BASIC LAW OF RUMOR***

States that the importance of the issue and the level of uncertainty around it will dictate the number of rumors circulating.

### ***Why rumors cannot be ignored***

- Rumors can provide honest feedback on programs
- Course correction and adaptations to improve response.
- Build Stronger relationships with affected populations.

### ***How do we manage rumors?***

Keep the following in mind while trying to debunk and manage rumors

- Speaking the right language is the first step, the language the community are most comfortable with.
- Tap into existing conversations
- Organize open two-way communication
- Use existing networks such as community influencers (chiefs, women representatives, youth leaders, religious leaders etc.)
- Work through partnerships



***People share rumours with their networks, these networks can be the most powerful tool to work with rumours.***

*Working with rumors: three complementary steps*



Not all rumours are equal.



## Rumor Tracking Tool Section A

### Rumor Tracking Tool

Name of person \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Location

State/County/Payam \_\_\_\_\_

Section A: To be filled by the social mobilizer

Date/month/year (When was the rumor heard?)	Location/village (Where was it heard?)	Rumor (Details of the rumor)	Channel How was the rumor heard?

## Rumor Tracking Tool Section B

Section B: This is to be filled by the supervisor only

Name of the Payam supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone contact \_\_\_\_\_

Verification status TRUE/FALSE	Risk Rating Low Medium High	Activities to be conducted	Monitoring Outcome Has the rumor stopped